

## Benjamin Freeman Bird home/property in Nauvoo

Dale L. Berge, *BYU Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, p.209

The Jonathan Browning property was acquired by Nauvoo Restoration, Incorporated, from the estate of Charles H. Hudson, who died 11 April, 1968. Mr. Hudson had lived in the Browning house for a few years when he was first married, but when the house he was building on the northwest quarter of Lot 2 was finished, he moved from the Browning house to the new home. This move took place in 1916, after which the Browning house was not reoccupied. Since 1916 the house was used mostly for storage and was allowed to decay. Mr. Hudson married Louise Schoell, who was the daughter of Fred Schoell, owner of the home from 1890 to 1912. Lot 2, Block 118, was originally purchased from Joseph Smith, trustee for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by Benjamin F. Bird in 1840. After Bird had paid nearly \$300 on the lot, he requested a deed for the south half and reverted the north half back to Joseph Smith. However, no record of the deed has been located.

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Jonathan Browning obtained the south half of Lot 2, Block 118, about 1843, the same year that he was baptized into the Mormon Church. He left Nauvoo in 1846 during the Exodus of the Mormons, and sometime thereafter the mother of Joseph Smith, Lucy Mack Smith, temporarily lived in the Browning Nauvoo home and shop. When the trustees of the Church sold the property to Peter Poncin in 1847, records indicate that on the property there was a "good brick house", "also a good brick blacksmith shop and a small frame barn and a log house." 6(1)

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During the historic Mormon period from 1839-1846, the northwest quarter of Lot 2, Block 118, was owned by George W. Harris, a watchmaker, while Heber C. Kimball owned the northeast quarter, which he subdivided into three smaller lots. The north half of Lot 3 to the south of Jonathan Browning was owned by Henry G. Sherwood. Shadrach Roundy and others owned the property to the rear of Jonathan's property.